



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

***Department of
Agricultural Commissioner/
Weights and Measures***

Cato R. Fiksdal
*Agricultural Commissioner/
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Robert G. Atkins
Chief Deputy

August 19, 2003

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**ADMINISTER FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAM THAT
REIMBURSES PLANT NURSERIES FOR COSTS RELATED TO
THE MITIGATION AND TREATMENT OF PLANT SHIPMENTS FOR
GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER INSECTS
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Instruct the Chair to sign upon presentation a cooperative agreement, #03-8500-0777-CA, with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), Plant Protection & Quarantine authorizing the Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures Department (ACWMD) to administer a \$5 million, federally funded, pass-through Nursery Pest Mitigation Program (NPMP). This program was developed to reimburse nurseries throughout Southern California for expenses incurred for preventing the spread of the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS).
2. Authorize one additional ordinance position (Accountant II) to process disbursements, pending allocation by the Department of Human Resources. This position is 100% revenue offset.
3. Authorize the Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures to amend the cooperative agreement in an amount not to exceed 10% of the agreement.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the above action will provide fiscal relief to plant nurseries within Southern California that ship live plants to areas not infested with GWSS by reimbursing them for a portion of their costs related to the treatment, inspection, trapping, and special handling of nursery stock and mitigation of the GWSS.

Glassy-winged sharpshooters utilize grape vines and many ornamental plants as sources of nutrition. When grape vines are used as a food source they have been known to transmit a disease known as Pierce's Disease, that destroys the vines. This disease has caused approximately 40 percent vine destruction in the Temecula Wine Region of California. The State has implemented a strict regulatory program to prevent the movement of infested plants to Northern California. The shipping nurseries have in good faith participated in this program, but at their own expense.

The ornamental plant industry in Southern California ships a variety of landscape plants which are hosts to GWSS to wholesale and retail outlets in Northern California that are located adjacent to high value grape growing areas. The potential for these shipments to create a pathway for moving GWSS into these grape growing areas presents a major concern for grape growers. The most expedient method to prevent the spread of GWSS is to inspect and treat these ornamental plants in the nursery prior to shipment. This cooperative agreement was developed specifically to reimburse growers for a portion of their treatment costs to mitigate this devastating insect vector.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

This cooperative agreement supports the County's goals of Service Excellence and Fiscal Responsibility. Administering the Nursery Pest Mitigation Program (NPMP) will provide a service to plant nurseries and the County will recover the cost of services rendered.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The cooperative agreement will provide funds for one additional ordinance position (Accountant II). This position will be fully revenue offset. There is no change to net County cost. The program is federally funded by the Nursery Pest Mitigation Program (NPMP). The County will receive \$96,819.00 to administer the program.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

This cooperative agreement is with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), Plant Protection & Quarantine. The federal award for this agreement is in the amount of \$5 million. The eligibility period for disbursements under this agreement is February 1, 2003 through January 31, 2004. All funds to be dispersed under this agreement are separate from County funds. This is not a retroactive contract. Payments are from USDA to nurseries throughout Southern California for work completed. ACWMD's role is administrative only. This agreement may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing.

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A letter and all associated documents provided by USDA-APHIS will be mailed to California nurseries, advising them of the program and extending an opportunity to sign up for partial reimbursement of expenses associated with mitigation of the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS). Each nursery wishing to participate in this program must complete and submit certain documentation and cost data. The nurseries are responsible for the documentation and audit trail. USDA will perform audits when they determine they are necessary.

Eligibility of each nursery will be determined by possession of a signed compliance agreement with Pierce's Disease Program, shipping live plants out of the infested area, and by completing and signing reimbursement requests.

The basis for reimbursement will be an average cost for units (equivalent units) shipped to non-infested destinations. An equivalent unit standardizes all sizes of plant material to the basic one-gallon plant. Smaller sizes are partial units, while larger sizes are multiples of one. Each request, submitted monthly, would include invoices for the amount of equivalent units shipped during a given period.

The Department has determined that the Living Wage Program (County Code, Chapter 2.201) does not apply.

The cooperative agreement has been reviewed by County Counsel and approved as to form.

CONCLUSION

When approved, please return to this Department (4) signed copies along with the minute order authorizing the Chair to sign.

Respectfully submitted,

Cato R. Fiksdal
Agricultural Commissioner/
Director of Weights and Measures

CRF:RAR:JWG:jwg

Attachments:

c: Chief Administrative Officer
CAO Analyst
County Counsel